

FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

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10 May 1982
MAU-2015

Chief, Operations Group

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Dear Jerry:

Subject: Austrian Bureau Copier

This letter seeks to enlist your support in solving what may seem a relatively minor problem. I assure you, however, that resolution of the problem will result in a not so minor improvement in quality of life and working conditions for both the bureau chief and the administrative assistant.

The problem is Austrian Bureau's copier. Our present 3M Model 732-B copier was purchased in October 1980 and consequently falls short of the lifespan normally required before authorization for a replacement machine can be obtained. Nevertheless, the present copier suffers from two deficiencies: it does not meet bureau needs, and it is apparently a lemon.

The machine falls short of meeting bureau requirements in that it prints only on a specially treated slick-surfaced paper on which it is difficult to make a clear impression with either pen or pencil; it makes only a single copy at a time, i.e., multiple copies can only be obtained by multiple manipulations of the machine, in a work environment where multiple copies are the norm; and it produces copies of low quality. The combination of only single copy capability and low copy quality results in all important copying projects being handcarried to the embassy and copies made there.

I call the machine a lemon because of its frequency of breakdowns requiring the calling of local repairmen (as opposed to the machine's propensity to jam, caused largely by the cardboard cassette paperfeed system). The 3M representative does not agree that the machine is inherently defective, arguing instead that we may be asking more of it than it was designed to handle. In any event, we have made sufficient impact with our complaints that 3M has tendered an offer to give us full credit (in the short term only) for the price paid for the present copier against purchase of a new machine.

I would like to take 3M up on its offer, but face two difficulties:

- 1) the requirement for clearance before purchasing copiers and
- 2) funding the purchase. It is at this point that you come into the

picture. There is little point in getting clearance to replace the present copier if funding for a new machine is not going to be available. The combination of efforts to stretch an already truncated FY 1982 budget to cover necessary in-house projects and a recent negative trend in the dollar-schilling exchange rate makes it impossible for the bureau to commit to covering the cost of a new copier through internal reprogramming. Thus, I request that you place the Austrian Bureau copier purchase on Operation Group's list of unfunded FY 1982 requirements and initiate clearance procedures if/when funds become available.

The replacement copier I have in mind is the 3M plain-paper, desk-top Model 545. Total cost of the copier would be approximately \$2,700 (that is, \$3,700 less the purchase price of the present machine of \$1,020). According to the 3M representative, the "545" would reduce our per copy cost from \$.08 to \$.02. I recommend continuing with the 3M line both because of the high trade-in allowance for the present machine and because 3M local service here is quite good, despite our present troubles.

I would appreciate an early indication as to the chances for approval of this request in order to either keep alive or terminate the discussions with 3M. A brief admin message stating "yes," "no," or even "maybe" will suffice.

Sincerely,



Chief, Austrian Bureau

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